

THROUGH PAINTED PANES & OTHER POEMS

LOUIS ALEXANDER ROBERTSON





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Through Painted Panes
And Other Poems

N O T E

Most of the poems in this collection have been taken from "The Dead Calypso," "Beyond the Requiems," "Clostral Strains," and "From Crypt and Choir."

All the unsold copies and plates of these books were destroyed by the great fire.

Several long poems, and some sonnets, rondeaus, and other minor forms, appear here for the first time.



Photograph by Arnold Genthe, San Francisco.

Louis A. Robertson

Through Painted Panes

And Other Poems

By

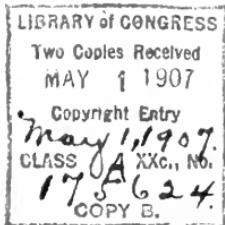
Louis Alexander Robertson

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A. M. Robertson

San Francisco

1907



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TO
JAMES DUVAL PHELAN
AN ABLE MAN AND LOYAL CITIZEN

I INSCRIBE THIS BOOK
WITH THE FOLLOWING LINES

R E S U R G A M

(CHANT ROYAL)

*The cataclysmal force to which we owe
Our glorious Gate of Gold, through which the sea
Rushed in to clasp these shores long, long ago,
Came once again to crown our destiny
With such a grandeur that in sequent years
This period of pain which now appears
Pregnant with doubt, shall vanish as when day
Drives the foreboding dreams of night away.
Born of the womb of Woe, where Sorrow sighs,
Fostered by Faith, undaunted by Dismay,
Earth's fairest City shall from ashes rise.*

RESURGAM

*Portentous of her lasting overthrow,
Scarce forty fateful seconds seemed to be;
And when the stars had faded in the glow
Of the bright baleful after-blaze, though she
Shed for some harrowing hours the tristful tears
Which showed her heart was torn, the Soul that cheers
And drives Despair forth from the creature clay,
Glowed in her breast and did to her display
Great stately structures soaring to the skies;
If from our cosmic creed we do not stray,
Earth's fairest City shall from ashes rise.*

*Garbed with chaste Grecian beauty she shall grow;
Her white hand holds Fortuna's fate-forged key
To where a world's ships, speeding to and fro,
Shall pause and pay a rich restoring fee;
Corruption, greed, and everything that bears
A semblance to them, every thought that sears
The heart and seeks the conscience to betray,
Should die ere born, lest later on Decay
Destroy the fabric seen with Fancy's eyes.
If we our crime-condemning laws obey,
Earth's fairest City shall from ashes rise.*

*When first her burning tears began to flow,
Her sapphire surges sobbed with sympathy;
The hosts of heaven heard their wail of woe
And chanted a responding threnody;*

RESURGAM

*The weeping waves, the mystic midnight spheres
Dispelled her doubts and drove away her fears
Of doomful dawns. Almighty God, are they
Not Baal's blind and blatant priests who say
The seismic curse was Thine? Thy Voice replies,
"Heed not the heresy they preach and pray,
Earth's fairest City shall from ashes rise."*

*Ofttimes from Shasta's cloud-kissed crest of snow,
Soul-winged, I sail o'er river, grove, and lea
To where I hear old Triton's trumpet blow,—
Where from the tide the wave-wombed Deity
Rises resplendent; with enraptured ears
The Goatfoot's pure prophetic pipes she hears;
Bacchus awaits her from the sparkling spray,
His vine-bound brow on her white breast to lay;
In one great hymn their voices harmonize,
This message doth the melody convey,—
Earth's fairest City shall from ashes rise.*

ENVOY

*Thou demon Fate, that erstwhile sought to slay
And scourge us to the death, thou canst not slay
The faith that every future blow defies;
Though we thy stealthy steps can never stay,
Earth's fairest City shall from ashes rise.*

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THROUGH PAINTED PANES

THROUGH painted panes a glory flows
And over aisle and altar throws
 Soft floods of crimson, blue, and gold,
 Till silent forms, in sculpture stoled,
Seem waking from a long repose.

Ah, how the tinted marble glows!
For every cheek now wears a rose,
 And each white face seems aureoled
 Through painted panes.

These weird word-weavers who disclose
Strange things to us in rhyme or prose,
 Who conjure up the dead and cold,
 Or Life's great varied page unfold,
Their art is but a light that shows
 Through painted panes.

THE SONNET

As often in some grand and ancient fane
A devotee will kneel him down to pray
At one familiar shrine day after day,
And to his guardian saint his woes complain;
There, while his fingers tell the beaded chain,
His soul in ecstasy drifts far away,
Till back returning with the vesper strain,
It enters once again its home of clay.

So in the cloistered corridors of Song
There is one altar where I love to kneel;
Tho' humblest of the worshipers who throng
Its narrow space, yet there I often steal,
And in the Sonnet's sacred chalice pour
My tears and prayers until I weep no more.

THE SHRINE OF SONG

IN mute amazement oft I pause before
The portals of Song's shrine and list to those
Whose music from its classic cloisters flows
Adown the tide of Time forevermore.
I see the place that no man may explore,
Save him whose Art its life to Genius owes,
On whose rapt lips the sacred cinder glows
That teaches Song's sweet shibboleth and lore.

Ah, it were heaven to enter in and kneel
In some dim aisle, unnoticed and apart,
With thirsting soul to drink the psalms
that shame
My songs to silence; then to rise and feel
That my untutored lips had learnt the art
That seats the singer in the House of
Fame.

EURYDICE

How Orpheus must have thrilled thy captive soul,
When, facing Dis, thy freedom to obtain,
He struck the classic chords, the master strain
That made rocks reel and rivers backward roll!
Hell's tortured heroes heard his harp extol
Thy matchless worth, till they forgot their pain,
And turned, one glimpse of thy fair face to gain,
As after him they saw thee earthward stroll.

Persephone sat silent while he played,
Then whispered to her lord to set thee free;
Dis nodded, and the heavy gates of Hell
Swung swift and wide, while Cerberus obeyed
The taming tune; then Orpheus turned to see
If thou wert safe, and heard thee cry "Farewell!"

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

THE lyre she loved to hear on Earth rang
through the halls of Hell,

The gloom became a golden dawn, the streams
of Sorrow turned

To rippling silver as she dropped Death's fading
asphodel,

Then in her tear-wet pallid cheeks Love's
crimson roses burned.

'T was the harp of her husband she heard in
the distance,

'T was the lute he had waked as a lover to
woo her,

And it called through the shades with the
searching insistence

Of a rapturing, rescuing summons that drew
her

Through the dark to where Acheron's waters
were sobbing,

But their sob seemed a psalm to the souls
that were greeting,

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

And a hymn to the hearts that together were
throbbing,

Till they rose and went onward, his lute-
strings entreating

Mighty Dis for the guerdon that none had been
granted,

Save his Queen, who sat by him, Demeter's
sad daughter;

How her soul with the cry of those chords was
enchanted!

What a vision of Earth and of Enna they
brought her!

Nearer and clearer and louder and prouder
echoed his strains, till the cries and the
clamor

Made by the hapless were hushed into silence,
lost in the silver-tongued tones that re-
sounded,—

That rang to the roof of that palace infernal,
till through the gloom that had grown
to a glamour,

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Throned 'neath a blazing and bright borealis,
Dis he beheld with his subjects surrounded.

He paused before the throne;
His hand fell from the strings,
Still trembling with the tone,
The spell that Music flings
Over the hardest heart;
Yea, though it be of stone,
The tears of Grief will start,
If it Love's lips hath known
And lost them as he lost
Those of Eurydice,
When Aristæus crossed
Her path upon the lea;
When from his arms she sprang,
Her loyal lips to save,
But felt the serpent's fang
And faced the wailing wave.

No need had he to speak a single word,
They knew his story well;

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

The throb within the harpings they had heard
 Told more than tongue could tell;
But all as deaf as to the clamoring hordes,
 Who gathered near,
Was Dis unto the pure and peerless chords
 Zeus loved to hear,
 Until his Queen
 Did closer lean
 And whisper in his ear:—
“By all the pledges thou hast given me,
Give Orpheus back his bride, Eurydice.”

He looked on her and said, “Yea, for thy sake
I'll yield me now.” And thus to Orpheus spake:—
 “If thou hast in thy soul
 The courage to control
The love that led thee hither, listen well;
 Thy bride may follow thee
 Back to thine Arcady,
But till both pass the lordly gates of Hell,
 Give not one backward glance
 To her, but still advance,

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Guide her to where your glowing roses bloom;
But if thou disobey
My mandate, she shall stray
Back to the home that waits her in the gloom."

Clear as the fluted notes that Philomel
Hymns to the midnight moon,
Sweet as the low wave-whisper in a shell,
Such was the silver tune
That Orpheus conjured from his chords at first,
To thank the Lord of Hell;
Then from his waked, exulting lyre there burst
An antiphonic swell
Of melody that thro' those sunless regions rolled,
Ere to earth's fragrant fields he and his loved
one strolled.

Dis listened with derision to the strain
That thrilled his captive Queen, Persephone;
For her it made the sombre shadows wane,—
Charmed by its weird soul-waking witchery,
She heard the murmur of Sicilian streams,
And saw the sacred meadow of her dreams.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

The song that spirit unto spirit sings
Then mingled with the music of the strings
That Orpheus struck, Eurydice to guide
Forth from the gloom to where her virgin vows
were sighed.

Sweet as the croon of the doves of Dodona,
cooing and wooing, his harmonies called
her,

Moving like one in a dream she obeyed them,
light seemed the cold lethal links that
enthralled her;

Far in the azure the lark whistled to her, borne
on the breeze came the fragrance of
flowers,

Soon with her lover she'll couch in the clover,
dreaming through Passion's sweet sen-
suous hours.

His harp sang of the bees,
And of the warbling birds
That nested in the trees
Above the sleeping herds;

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Then one clear conjuring cadence crowned his
lyre,

And Arcady seemed near, home of her heart's
desire.

Lulled by his lute-strings, Hell's mighty immor-
tals paused to behold her as onward she
wended;

Cerberus leaped like a lamb from his kennel,
fawned on the lily-white hand she ex-
tended;

Followed her on, as she followed her lover,
led by the lute that had ne'er known
denial,

Till Orpheus drew near the ponderous portals,
looked on the sunlight, and then came
the trial.

Oh, how his triumphing harp-strings then
trembled! Fair were the streams and
the meadows that faced him,

Where, in the first fervid faith of her girlhood,
glowing Eurydice's white arms embraced
him.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Oh, what a breath of ambrosial sweetness fanned
her fair cheek! What a halo of splendor
Shone through the gloom on her golden corym-
bus! How those clear chords compelled
all things to render

Homage to her, as when Dis was persuaded to
give her again to the arms of her lover,
If he could lead her, and never look backward,
out of the gloom to their couch in the
clover!

The gates of Hell he gained,
A single step remained

To set his loved one free;
But ere that port was passed,
A glance he backward cast

And saw Eurydice,
With outstretched hands, into the darkness fade;
Oh, what a price for that last look was paid!

Sun, that shiniest in the bluest skies that over
Earth e'er bended,
And ye mystic stars of midnight, and thou
wanton, wandering moon!

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Ye were watchers, ye were list'ners, when his
quest for her was ended,
Whisper to us through the ages, tell us if
some tristful tune
Sobbed within the strings to soothe him, or if—
like a peal of thunder—
Some swift harmony revengeful 'gainst the
gates of Hell he poured?
Was it pride, or was it passion, that impelled
him to the blunder,
When her heart, with love responding, broke
to hear the crowning chord?

PROSERPINA

DAUGHTER of Ceres, throned within the shade
Of Hell's black arches, ever gazing through
The gloom to where, wet with the morning dew,
The violet greets the sun in Enna's glade;
Year after year it flourishes to fade,
But thro' the mists of time thy face we view,
As fair as when great Pluto paused to woo,
When at thy side his foaming steeds were stayed.

The fragrant fields of sea-girt Sicily,
That bloomed beneath thy feet, have barren grown,
And all the music of her streams is still;
The birds sit mute on every withered tree,
With thistles now that velvet sward is sown,
The winds that wantoned with thy hair are chill.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE OLD BALLADE

Of all the tangled tropes that tell
Of love, or hate, or joy, or pain,
In sonnet, rondeau, villanelle,
Or ode, or epic, or quatrain,
Or any other kind of strain,
Or light, or heavy, gay, or sad,
To bring a boon, or balk a bane,
There's nothing like the old ballade.

Its single cymbal suits me well,
But when I sound the clanging twain,
Then Pegasus begins to smell
The battle, and he shakes his mane;
No need of spur, I give him rein;
Think ye that he's a patient pad?
To make him gallop for his grain
There's nothing like the old ballade.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE OLD BALLADE

Did not rash Villon in his cell,
 Hard by the sobbing waves of Seine,
Deaf to the dooming, dismal bell,
 And all unmindful of his chain,
 There carol forth a rare refrain
That comes to us with glory clad?
 If rhyme could rid him of his stain,
There's nothing like the old ballade.

For from his reckless lips there fell
 Such glowing gems, that Glory's fane,
Wherein the world's immortals dwell,
 Doth many a less than he contain.
 The prude may treat him with disdain,
She neither can detract nor add,
 For beauty did a champion gain;
There's nothing like the old ballade.

The high-born maiden's heart will swell,
 And think the whispered vow inane
Sweet as the voice of Philomel,
 When Poesy hath made it plain;

THERE 'S NOTHING LIKE THE OLD BALLADE

See yonder awkward stammering swain!
His simple song makes Chloe glad;
When tongues are tied, and vows are vain,
There 's nothing like the old ballade.

The tune that Triton taught the shell,
Sung by the surge and hurricane;
The lute of Orpheus, 'neath whose spell
We, like the Grecians, long have lain;
Pan's pipes that filled the shepherd's brain
With melody that made him mad,
All live, so why should Villon wane?
There 's nothing like the old ballade.

ENVOY

Prince! though this tantalizing skein
Of rhyme hath less of good than bad,
A cup to Villon let us drain,
There 's nothing like the old ballade.

ART

THOU breathest on the cold insensate stone,
And lo! it throbs with immortality;
The canvas, with thy conjuring pigments strown,
Glows with a beauty that will never die;
The deepest fountains of the heart run dry
When o'er the trembling strings thy hand is
thrown,
And when we hear thy tongue's rich sorcery,
We know not why we laugh, or weep, or moan.

We know not why, nor do we care to know
Where rise the waters of that mystic stream
Which bears the spirit onward in its flow,
Till, all unconscious of the clay, we seem
To feel the breath of an ambrosial breeze,
And drift with it o'er dreamy sapphire seas.

PHRYNE

A DREAM

WHEN thou wert with me in the waking hours
Of those delirious but degrading days
Now gone forever; or when on my breast,
Pillowed in slumber, thy fair cheek was laid,
Whether it was that each enchanted sense
Was drugged so deeply with thy sorcery,
Or whether thy warm lips in whispers low,
Unheard by me, murmured unto my heart,
“Why dream of me when I am by thy side?”
I cannot say; but through those after hours—
The sequent drowsy intervals when Love
Languished a little ere it waked again—
I never saw thy face come to console,
Or mock me in my sleep as now, when I
Turn in the dark with dream-deluded lips
To kiss the pillow pressed by thee no more.

PHRYNE

Sometimes as fair as Eos, when she flings
The sombre curtains of the night apart
To beam in beauty on a sleeping world,
Dost thou appear to me; yea, I have felt
The pressure and the passion of thy lips,
And even heard them whisper as of old.

One night I dreamt that I was one among
A multitude of people gathered in
The city Cecrops founded; I beheld
A spacious place, circled with shrines and fanes,
Ornate with chiseled treasures that were brought
From classic shades to crown a pagan rite
With a reflected glory of the day
That dawned when Aphrodite trod the seas.

In the mute language that the dreamer speaks,
I questioned one who stood near me to learn
The meaning of the mighty concourse there;
He pointed to an empty pedestal
Standing between two sculptured effigies
Of wave-wombed Cytherea; one revealed
A carved conceit of unimpassioned Love,

PHRYNE

The other was a marble dream of Lust.
Upon the right the chaste Ourania sat,
A milk-white dove upon her whiter breast,
And on her brow the sacred myrtle leaves.
Upon the left Euplœa stood, as when
The Cnidian youth stole to her in the dark,
And stained her snowy bosom with the blood
Of lips that crushed her marble mouth in vain.

Then mystic hymns, such as are only heard
In the domain of an englamouring dream,
Rolled from the opening portals of a fane
In which a throng of priestesses appeared,
Led by a priest; a woman with them walked,
Hooded and masked, garbed in a purple robe
That swept the shining tiles on which she trod
With slow and stately step, until she came
And paused in silence at the vacant plinth.

Then did the priest proclaim that she was one
In whom the best and basest elements
Mingled together in a breast on which
E'en Zeus himself had been content to rest.

PHRYNE

He also told that listening host that she
Possessed the cestus Cytherea wore,—
The conquering charm that no man may resist;
He said it was a flavor of the flesh
Found only in a few, and only when
Some face, some form, and, it may be, some voice
Combine with it to kindle in the blood
The rabies of a desperate desire.
He said, as well, she loved to worship in
Pandemos' shrine, then wander forth to give
The sailormen of Salamis her lips.

Then turning from that eager throng to her,
And pointing to the plinth, he said, "Ascend,
Let us behold the breathing beauty which
In after ages man shall turn to see,
But through the dim deluding mists of time,
For thou art one of those who have the power
To prompt the chisel and the brush and pen,
And gain an undeserved but deathless fame."

Still masked and robed, she in an instant scaled
The waiting pedestal, where she remained

PHRYNE

A mystery for a moment, but no more;
For, at a sign, the robe fell from her form,
The hood dropped off, the mask was flung aside,
And Phryne stood in faultless beauty there.

The marble miracle of Phidias,
The chaste Ourania, seemed to shrink away;
The people cried with an applauding voice,—
“Euplœa! O Euplœa!” For they saw
In Phryne’s form the living counterpart
Of one whose Parian beauty never paled,
Until it met its breathing prototype,
The matchless mistress of Praxiteles.

Then silence followed; as I looked on her,
Methought I saw a likeness unto thee,
And cried thy name aloud; a thousand tongues
Chorused my cry and claimed thee as their own;
Then in the clamor I awoke to find
The dream as fleeting as thy faithless love.

BY WESTERN SHORES

By Western Shores oft Triton blows
His sounding shell, and she who rose
 All wet and wanton from the deep,
 To make man's pulse with passion leap,
Here on the wave in beauty glows.

A herd upon the hillside lows,
And where yon stream in music flows,
There Pan is piping to his sheep,
By Western Shores.

Here vine-crown'd Bacchus doth repose,
And nymphs and satyrs, like to those
 Of Tempe, from the copses peep.
Why for the fabled Lotus weep,
When near the Poppy we may doze
 By Western Shores?

THE MÆNAD

WHY call this fiction in thy face a blush,
When that pure protest faded years ago?
This is the fervid and precursive flush
That makes the Mænad's cheek with crimson
glow,—

The rosy herald Passion sends to show
That I the ripe grapes of thy lips may crush,
Till thro' my veins more rapturing transports rush,
Than from the richest sun-kissed clusters flow.

Love's chalice, garlanded with myrtle leaves,
Is sweet to sip, but when Desire hath grown
Drunk with the purple poppy-seeded wine
Thy passion offers, then thy sorcery weaves
The spell by Circe o'er Ulysses thrown,
The charm that changed his comrades into
swine.

HELEN

THESE are the eyes in which proud Paris gazed,
When fast across the dark Ægean sea
He fled with Helen on the night when she
Left Sparta's shore, and Menelaus raised
The rescuing cry; then War's red beacon blazed,
While Greece with all her glorious chivalry
Dashed 'gainst the dauntless Dardan hosts to
free
The fair and faithless woman Homer praised.

Virtue hath rarely worn Fame's glittering crown;
Where are the women of the past who reigned
In spotless robes? Penelope, Lucrece,—
Ah, God! how few! But Helen's glorious gown
Defies the dust of ages, and though stained
With Passion's grapes, gives glamour unto
Greece.

PROTEAN ZEUS

INTO a Satyr did the God degrade
Himself to clasp Antiope an hour;
Then, as a Bull he figured, to deflower
Europa, deemed Phœnicia's fairest maid.
Amphitryon's part he with Alcmena played;
To Danaë he seemed a Golden Shower;
In Dian's form Callisto he betrayed,
And as a Flame entered Ægina's bower.

Once where Eurotas' murmuring waters flow,
A frightened Swan sought Leda's sheltering
breast;
In his warm plumage, whiter than the snow,
The crimson roses of her cheeks she pressed;
From that immortal mingling Helen came,
Whose beauty set the Trojan towers aflame.

IN ABSENCE

I SIT with Pan beneath Arcadian trees
And see the satyr and the nymph and faun;
I look on dazzling Aphrodite drawn
By dolphins over shining sapphire seas;
I hear the tune of Triton in the breeze,
Sad Philomel at night, the lark at dawn,
But little power have they to appease
My passion and my pain when thou art gone.

Yea, e'en the paths of Poesy seem bare
Of all their beauty, for I fail to find
In them the flowers whose fragrance once
could fling
A spell around me that defied despair,
That made me deaf to Love, to Passion blind,
But little consolation now they bring.

THE THUNDER TUNE

THERE was music mingling with the thunder
when the lightnings o'er Olympus flashed,
And the gods who slumbered 'round their
Master waked and heard the harmony that
crashed

From the clouds that later hung o'er Ilion, and
the dirge of her destruction roared,
When her thronging hosts with those of Hellas
for the beauty of a woman warred.

There was music mingling with the thunder, but
it was the music of a dream,
And, perchance, had passed away in silence, lost
forever, but by Meles' stream

There was born a child around whose cradle
all the Muses met, to whom they brought
From Latona's son a silver-chorded harp to
which in after years he taught

THE THUNDER TUNE

The melodious and majestic measure, which a
world with rapture ever hears,
For the dreaming soul of sightless Homer saw
the vision that to few appears.

Heard the music mingling with the thunder, and
the pæan of the cloud-throned choir,
Caught the meaning of the clamoring chorus,
taught it to his ever-living lyre.

Few, as he, controlled the chords that summon
back again the dust-dimmed days of old;
Few e'er decked the dead in richer raiment,
turned their faded garments into gold.

Then within the clouds the music slumbered,
near a thousand years it silent slept,
Till the graceful melodist of Mantua waked and
struck the strings that Homer swept.

Then again we saw the calm Ægean ripple into
rapture as his lyre
Sent its silver strains across the waters, crim-
soned with the red reflected fire

THE THUNDER TUNE

Of the flaming falling towers of Ilion, ere
Æneas unto Carthage came,
Where for him the love-defeated Dido gave her
faultless body to the flame.

Then there came a seeming endless silence,
gleamings of the lightning, but no more,
Till the lean-lipped melancholy Tuscan, wan-
dering exiled by an alien shore,

Dreaming of old Portanari's daughter, saw the
levin leap across the skies,
Heard the deafening thunder tune that followed,
saw the Mantuan's guiding shade arise;

Trod with him the circling scenes of Torture,
heard Hell's captives curse in frost and
flame,

Garbed the spectres with a ghastly glory, shrined
them in an everlasting fame.

Then the sleeping thunder-freighted fleeces
drifted North and over Stratford's stream,
Hovered there in silence for a season, ere they
flashed the great prophetic gleam

THE THUNDER TUNE

That foretold a measure more melodic than the
dirge that Dante heard in Hell,
Or the verse that Virgil made Æneas, or the
hymn that Homer sang so well.

Little had he of the graceful Latin, less, or
nothing, of the grander Greek,
But his soul had listened to the sermons that the
stones, the brooks, the breezes speak;

Nature's mystic voice for him grew vibrant, in
its tones her mother tongue he heard,
Then she gave him his unclouded crystals, made
him master of the wizard word.

Through his clear uncompromising lenses Life
is seen denuded, undisguised;
In the glowing spectrum of his genius all its
tints and tones are analyzed.

Pictured on his panoramic pages, strange im-
perishable scenes appear;
Through the gamut of his glorious music, won-
drous cries and cadences we hear.

THE THUNDER TUNE

In his songs the shrieking Saxon saga mingles
with the matin of the lark,
And the midnight plaint of Philomela lends a
golden glory to the dark.

'Neath didactic Touchstone's masking motley,
'neath the 'guising garb of Rosalind,
All the lore of Life and Love is hidden, all
their foibles and their faiths we find;

Never had a King a better kingdom than the
banished Duke in Arden found;
Little mourned he for his stolen sceptre, when
he heard those leafy lanes resound

With the voices of his comrades chanting that
Fate's quiver holds no hurtling dart
That may not be blunted, bent, and broken
'gainst the shield of a contented heart.

Hark! here comes the prince of pot-house
heroes; watch the vine-born valor, wit, and
craft

Rise and break like bubbles on the surface of
the seas of sack which he has quaffed;

THE THUNDER TUNE

O'er that tide he sailed with well-trimmed
canvas, every breeze that blew was fair
for him,

And, with Hamlet, Shylock, and Othello, Fal-
staff hath a fame Time cannot dim.

Hear the protest 'gainst the quick quietus, when
the demon whispered to the Dane,

And then listen to the larger logic of the fervent
phrases that contain

Such a creed, that Death's loud sudden sum-
mons, or his faint procrastinated call,

Wakes no fear in those who face the darkness
with the words "The readiness is all!"

Woven with the figments of his fancy, 'mongst
the many fibres there is one

Which a woman's white ambitious fingers to a
cord of cruel crimson spun;

This she threaded to Fate's flying shuttle, where
it blent with paler woofs and warps,

Till upon the loom the longed-for fabric faded
to the graveclothes of a corpse.

THE THUNDER TUNE

She had hoped to wear the royal raiment, as the
witches' wizened lips had vowed,
But Revenge and swift-winged Retribution
changed the promised purple to a shroud.

For the phantom dagger found the fingers of
the faithless Lord of Dunsinane,
And the Wood of Birnam proved its portent
when the King was murdered by the Thane.

Hear the lonely lips of Mariana sigh for those
that sweetly were forsworn,
Listen to her lute-strings as they tremble, learn
the deathless lyric that was born

Of a love that faced the darkling distance, as a
Rose a lofty Star will woo,
Till it falls into her fragrant bosom, mirrored
in a drop of midnight dew.

All his airy nothings are eternal; when, in after
ages, naught remains
Of Earth's proudest piles and fairest fabrics,
not a vestige of her vanished fanes,—

THE THUNDER TUNE

When her sacred moss-grown shrines surrender
unto Time, who ever on them glowers,
Man shall see Titania in the moonlight, crown
the Weaver with unfading flowers.

THE CALIFORNIAN REDWOODS

ERE over Nilus' waking wave the strain
Of Memnon's morning melody was blown;
Ere Cheops from his quarries clove the stone
And piled his pyramid on Egypt's plain;
And later, ere the God-projected fane
Of Solomon had into grandeur grown;
Before the glory of the Greek was known,
Or Romulus the she-wolf's dugs did drain:—

We stood in youth where now in age we stand,
Colossal types of life that closer climb
To clasp the stars than any living thing.
Ye cherish crumbling temples that were planned
In Dian's day, yet deem it not a crime
Our older glory in the dust to fling.

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

NOT in cataclysmal chaos, earthquake, fire, or
flood, or blast,

Waits the world to hear the summons calling
her to death at last.

Oft she hears a muttered menace, sees the
ghastly lightnings gleam,

And the slumbering volcano vomit forth its
lethal stream;

Oft she sees the wind-whipped waters leaping
to the sullen skies,

And the foaming tidal terror in its deadly
might arise;

But still deaf to all the dirges that have rolled
above her dead,

And the songs that stir the living, she has ever
onward sped,

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

As when first, a vagrant vapor, thrown from
off the glowing breast

Of her mighty parent planet, up the shining
path she pressed,

Lifeless, nebulous, and naked, save the vesture
that was drawn

'Round her like a misty mantle, as she speeded
to the dawn.

Who can guess the force that flung her out
upon the star-strewn deep

Clasped her cloudy cincture 'round her,
taught her how her course to keep

Through the vast uncharted regions, orbed
her, shaped her, 'round her flung

Icy bands and frozen fetters that for æons to
her clung?

Long she drifted through the darkness, but at
last the Word was heard,

And the cold, insensate sleeper to the waken-
ing message stirred;

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

Felt the quickening breath that melted frozen
field and moor and main,
Drank the draught of saving sunlight, lost the
winter-woven chain;

Grew in grandeur and in beauty, soaring to
the noonday height,
Till the mighty Hand that hurled her out
upon the cosmic night

Draws her back to death and darkness, shrouds
her in her ice once more,
Stripped of all her garnered glory, all her
Science, Song, and Lore.

There shall be no eye to see it, Life shall long
have left the earth,
When she reels, a dying planet, to the breast
that gave her birth.

All our knowledge is as nothing; clear-eyed
Reason stands aghast,
For she sees the light that led us through the
dark and distant past

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

Lost within the larger lustre Science sheds
upon Earth's doom,
Is it better than the glow-worm that we fol-
lowed in the gloom?

While Earth speeds to where unnumbered
sister stars are frozen spheres,
Faith, before her falling altars, lifts her fear-
less face and hears

Every cherished creed derided, but still mum-
bles to her beads,
Dreaming that beyond the requiems deathless
life to death succeeds.

Hope's pale star still smiles to soothe us, dis-
tant, indistinct, and cold,
As the primal moth beheld it, do we now its
beams behold?

Are we nearer than the nascent life that slum-
bered in the slime,
When the protoplasmic moner scanned the
steeps that it must climb?

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

Or the microcosmic atom, ere its fetters left
it free?

Or the blind bathybius sleeping at the bottom
of the sea?

Yea, the germ, primordial, potent, saw the
goal that it must gain,

Found a hovel in man's body, built a palace
in his brain.

And the selfsame seeds that wakened with it
in Earth's virgin womb

Fill the fields with fragrant blossoms, or in
poisoned petals bloom;

Make the wilderness grow vocal with the
voice of bird and brute,

Send the great Sequoia skyward, gnaw in
cankers at its root;

Never swerving from the settled purpose of
the primal plan,

Save when planted in the passions and the
burning brain of man;

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

There, oft glorious, often ghastly, oft degraded, oft divine,

Sometimes soaring to the stars, and sometimes wallowing with the swine;

Always out of tune with Nature; is the human brute the best,

Fated to the thralling thirst that burns forever in his breast,

Which hath ever urged us onward o'er Life's sterile sands, till we,

Rich in knowledge, rich in wisdom, panting forward, ever see

Silent and untrodden regions, over which the mirage beams,

But its tempting trees and waters murmur only in our dreams?

They have murmured unto myriads and beguiled them in the past,

They will call through coming ages, long as life on earth shall last,

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

When she hurries through the spaces on to
where the peril hides,

As some bark on her own bosom sails through
tranquil tropic tides,

Freighted full with costly treasures, till some
stealthy stream or breeze

Woos her from the summer waters into dark
and winter seas,

Where the icy currents clasp her, and the
frozen vapors turn

Into cerements of silver, shrouding her from
stem to stern.

Galley slaves were ne'er chained closer than
her captive crew, whose doom

Is to drift to death through darkness, fettered
to their floating tomb;

Crouching in the cold and shrinking from
their dreaded end they gaze

On some spectre sail that mocks them as it
passes in the haze.

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

So the life that lingers latest on this planet
still will yearn

For the peace the world denies it, yea, though
it again return

To the lowest type that sheltered in its breast
Hope's latent spark,

And then fanned it to the fatuous flame that
lures us through the dark.

All our philosophic pedants, all our sons of
Science know

Not a whit more than that dullard dreamed
unnumbered years ago,

As to where the spirit wanders when the body
sinks in death,

For beyond the grave's black portals never
man has breathed one breath.

We have probed the past and hunted in its
deepest, darkest cells,

But the secret still eludes us, never by one
whisper tells

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

Where Life felt its first faint tremor, for it
was not born of naught,
Never seed spontaneous blossoms till the
quickening breath be brought.

As we know not the beginning, so we may not
know the end,
But as life from life first started, back, through
death, to life 't will wend.

Now and then some guide arises who would
turn us from our path
With sweet promises that please us, or with
threats of future wrath.

We have listened to His lessons, heard the
Nazarene's behest,
“Follow Me, my way-worn children, I alone
can give ye rest.”

We have wondered as we hearkened unto
Buddha's pleading voice,
If to find the peace men long for, they could
make a wiser choice.

BEYOND THE REQUIEMS

We have seen the swarthy Arab step athwart
our path and say,
"Ye shall drink the living waters, if my pre-
cepts ye obey."

We have searched the stars above us for the
secret, but no beam

Lights our darkened path to guide us to the
goal of which we dream.

Little hope or help is hidden in the garners
of the past,

All its poets, priests, and sages, all the wisdom
which they massed,

All its fables, faiths, and fictions, all its tem-
ples, triumphs, tomes

Tell us nothing of the region where the flesh-
freed spirit roams.

THE MAN IS NOTHING, THE WORK IS ALL

THIS world is but a noisy show,
A mighty, motley masquerade,
Where countless actors come and go,
A tragedy and gasconade,
Where many puzzling parts are played;
Till curtained with Death's dusty pall,
And in Time's testing balance weighed,
The man is nothing, the work is all.

Forward they press, both high and low,
And rich and poor, and gay and staid;
Some climb where Fame's fair mountains glow,
While others grovel in the glade;
But when at last the sexton's spade
Hath built the bed to which they crawl,
When requiems roll and prayers are prayed,
The man is nothing, the work is all.

THE MAN IS NOTHING, THE WORK IS ALL

Though rivers red as crimson flow
Beneath the shot-torn barricade;
Though on the clay of fallen foe
Thrones have been reared with reeking blade,
Yet when some tyrant hath betrayed
His trust, our freedom to enthrall,
War's waking cry should be obeyed,
The man is nothing, the work is all.

Fate's shuttle flashes to and fro,
And many curious webs are made;
Oft Fortune doth her smile bestow
To light some dullard through the shade;
While Genius, jilted by the jade,
Hears in the gloom Fame's clarion call,
"Toil on! toil on! be not afraid,—
The man is nothing, the work is all."

Through scenes of sin and ways of woe
Some reckless sons of Song have strayed.
Villon and Burns, Verlaine and Poe,
And Wilde, her latest renegade,

THE MAN IS NOTHING, THE WORK IS ALL

With others whom the Fates have flayed,
Who to the dregs drained Sorrow's gall,
Wear the fair leaves that never fade;
The man is nothing, the work is all.

To some misleading guides we owe
Lights that have made us retrograde;
While others up Time's ramparts throw
For us a shining escalade,
By which we may at last invade
Truth's glorious and eternal hall;
Or fair, or foul, in Life's crusade,
The man is nothing, the work is all.

ENVOY

Whene'er we glory or upbraid
The good or bad, the great or small,
This maxim may our judgment aid,
The man is nothing, the work is all.

HOVE-TO

BAFFLED, but bravely, like a stag at bay,
She faced the driving gale and angry sea;
Under short canvas and with helm a-lee,
Hove-to, upon the starboard tack she lay
And looked into the wind's wild eye that day.
Over the great green rolling billows she
Rode like a storm-bird, and did seem to be
A mist-born phantom rising from the spray.

Her tightened weather-shrouds rang like a
lyre,
Struck by the furious Storm-king as he
passed;
Wild ocean wraiths wailed in the thundering
choir,
A thousand demons shrieked in every blast;
Yet better thus to battle with the gale,
Than drift o'er sleeping seas with listless sail.

WHEN VIOLETS BLOOM

WHEN violets bloom, 't is when the year
Wakes from her winter dream to hear
 Spring's cradle-song crooned by the gale
 O'er meadow, mountain, moor, and dale,
That these pure purples first appear.

Then Summer's daughters come, who wear
More gorgeous robes, but they are mere
 Maids to the modest Queen we hail
 When violets bloom.

Then hosts of fragrant followers rear
Their sun-kissed crests of beauty ere
 The frosts of Winter fall, but fail
 To make these virgins of the vale
Forgotten by the hearts they cheer
 When violets bloom.

THE UNKNOWN LOVE

As in the City of the Violet Crown
An altar to the Unknown God was raised
Midst shrines of beauty that a world
amazed,
And even now in crumbling grandeur frown;
For well the fine Hellenic hand could gown
The stone with glory; but while strangers
praised
The peerless piles, the Greek upon them
gazed
Unmoved by all their beauty and renown.

For every sense was sated, and he yearned
For more than soulless marble could contain,
Then did his vague idolatry disown;
So I on Passion's altars long have burned
The incense of my soul, but all in vain,—
The love I dream of I have never known.

THE ROSE

WHEN to my lips this rose I pressed,
Life with new beauty seemed to glow.
A love that slumbered in my breast,
When to my lips this rose I pressed,
Leaped back to life, and I confessed
 The pledge I gave thee long ago.
When to my lips this rose I pressed,
Life with new beauty seemed to glow.

When first our fervid troth was told,
 I gave it to thee with a vow.
Shall I forget that night of old,
When first our fervid troth was told,
And when I swore that it should hold
 Me true to thee? It holds me now.
When first our fervid troth was told,
 I gave it to thee with a vow.

THE ROSE

And now it comes in after years,
 Its scent and color gone with age,
Wet with Faith's timid, trustful tears.
And now it comes in after years,
 And cries aloud to Love that hears
 And hastens to redeem the gage.
And now it comes in after years,
 Its scent and color gone with age.

And back to where I met thee first
 This faded flower my memory bears;
All doubts of thee it hath dispersed,
And back to where I met thee first
 I speed with every sense athirst,
 My soul the sacred summons hears,
And back to where I met thee first
 This faded flower my memory bears.

I see the love-light in thine eyes,
 I listen to thy murmurs low,
I drink the rapture of thy sighs;
I see the love-light in thine eyes,

THE ROSE

And oh! I see the tears that rise,
And curse the fate that made them flow.
I see the love-light in thine eyes,
And listen to thy murmurs low.

The lips I loved may now be pale,
But what is that, dear one, to me?
Time's touch will make the fairest fail.
The lips I loved may now be pale,
But through the gloom I hear them wail,
And haste across the years to thee.
The lips I loved may now be pale,
But what is that, dear one, to me?

LET 'S KISS A KISS

LET 'S kiss a kiss and vow a vow

And lightly laugh at far-off years;
Ere yet beneath their weight we bow,
Let 's kiss a kiss and vow a vow

That age shall find us then as now,

Linked by a love that never fears.

Let 's kiss a kiss and vow a vow

And lightly laugh at far-off years.

EVOLUTION

MYSTICAL Dream of Creation!
Problem of Dark Evolution!
 Tell us the world's early story,
 Life's hidden secret unfold.
Vain is each wild speculation,
 Groping in gloom for solution,
 Enough that from darkness sprang glory,
 Sunrise in crimson and gold.

Mounting the stream of the ages,
 Up to its sources of mystery,
 Threading its channels uncertain,
 What after all have we won?
Blank were the world's early pages,
 Buried in myth was its history,
 Long after Earth's misty curtain
 Glowed with the light of the sun.

EVOLUTION

Still in the quarried tradition,
Still in the ice-graven story,
Still in the rock-written fable,
Linger the throes of thy birth;
Marking thy growth and transition,
Back in the centuries hoary,
Legends that teach and enable
Thy children to know thee, O Earth!

Nebulous waif of obscurity,
On through immensity stealing,
Wandering child of the forces,
Dropped from the matrix of night!
Fashioning thyself to maturity,
Sphering and fusing, annealing,
Through the dark centuries' courses
Drifting along to the light.

Chaos all order confounding,
Yet ever silently speeding
On with instinctive elusion,
Steadily holding thy way;

EVOLUTION

Darkness primeval abounding,
Down through the æons unheeding,
Ever mid murky confusion
Blundering on to the day.

Thundered a mandate through heaven,
“Let there be light!” and the vapors,
Losing themselves in the ocean,
Mingled again with the deep.
Then followed morning and even,
Night lit her pale distant tapers,
Order was born of commotion,
Earth was awakened from sleep.

Laboring in primal gestation,
Life in its forms multifarious,
Eager to meet the sun’s kisses,
Leaped in her womb with delight;
Weary of long nidulation,
Up from their wallows lutarious,
Up from their darksome abysses
Swarmed the strange brood of the night.

EVOLUTION

Life in fantastic variety,
Breeding and battling and dying,
Struggling for very existence,
Rending with fang and with nail;
Death, never gorged with satiety,
Over the massacre flying,
Blind to the light in the distance,
Deaf to the song in the gale.

Type against type for survival
Through the long ages contending,
All for supremacy striving,
Man as the master they own;
Brute of the brutes without rival,
Up from the conflict ascending,
Scheming, coercing, contriving,
Building the steps to his throne.

Fatuous child of mortality,
Swaddled in dark superstition,
Groping thy way through obscurity,
Stumbling, but stumbling to rise;

EVOLUTION

Casting aside animality,
Girding thyself with ambition,
Fearlessly facing futurity,
Scaling the steeps of the skies.

Race against race for dominion,
Creed against creed for conviction,
Throne against throne for subversion,
Moving like puppets at play;
Battling to force an opinion,
Bleeding to follow a fiction,
Dying, with instant reversion,
To mingle again in the fray.

Many a crimson libation,
Poured on barbarian altars,
Freer and faster than water,
Purples thy triumph with shame;
Many a lurid oblation,
Smoking to priest-prated psalters,
Many a monster of slaughter
Fiddling a kingdom to flame.

EVOLUTION

Many a Moloch of cruelty,
Many a Tophet infernal,
Hope, after gory baptism,
 Flung to the funeral pyre;
But with death-scorning credulity,
Pluming its pinions eternal,
Up from the murderous abysm
 Springing, like phœnix, from fire.

Dross of the brute disappearing,
Lost in the burning purgation,
Leaving the spirit less weighted,
 Less overburdened with clay;
On to the light ever faring,
Toiling in endless gradation,
Lower to higher translated,
 Rising from darkness to day.

Many a sacred Thermopylæ
Hurling defiance at slavery,
Many a crucified martyr
 Dying for love of his kind.

EVOLUTION

Tyranny, kingcraft, monopoly,
Yielding to justice and bravery;
Liberty's blood-blazoned charter
Many a despot hath signed.

Many a conquest of Science,
Shaming the warrior's sabre;
Many a triumph of morals,
Wisdom and Mercy and Love.

Many a blade of defiance
Forged to the ploughshare of Labor;
Many a chaplet of laurels
Wreathed with the olive above.

Height after height hast thou taken,
Yet there are others remaining,
Far in the pure empyrean
Truth's shining battlements rise;
Scale them with courage unshaken,
Death and disaster disdaining,
Storm them with jubilant pæan,
Capture the gates of the skies.

EVOLUTION

Then shall all ills of mortality
Unto thy wisdom surrender;
Knowledge supreme and supernal,
Leaving no summit to scale.
Truth, in her white-robed reality,
Opening her portals of splendor,
Yielding her treasures eternal,
Lifting Obscurity's veil.

REMEMBER THEE!

REMEMBER thee! The earliest morning beam
That breaks my slumber brings thee back to me.
Then through the long and lonely day I see
Thy haunting beauty, and my soul doth dream
Of blissful bygone raptures that redeem
These tristful moods and keep me true to thee.
Then, in the dark, I kneel and pray to be
Blessed with thy passion, peerless and supreme.

Remember thee! Recall the midnight hours—
The glorious gloom—in which we found the way,
Thro' sensuous shades, to where our spirits met
And breathed the fragrance of the purple flowers
Which Passion gives his favored ones who stray
Where we have strolled, then ask if I forgot.

THE TELLTALE MARKS

I DREAMT one night that I beheld thee dead;
The Spoiler scarce had stolen thy breath away,
When I bent over thy beloved clay,
Speechless and tearless, with a nameless dread.
For all thy pallid flesh, from heel to head,
Passion's empurpled lip-prints did display;
Unnumbered ghosts of bygone loves were they;
Thy pale lips moved, and this is what they said:—

“Thou didst believe me true, but my false heart
Was traitor to thee, and I did conceal
My shame for many years; but now my art
Avileth not; these telltale marks reveal,
Each one, a guilty love—” “No more!” I cried,
And woke to find thee sleeping at my side.

THE DEVOTEE

THOU art no saint, but when I feel
Thy blessed lips on mine,
In adoration I could kneel
And own thee half divine.
A glory crowns thy golden hair,
And lights thy loving eyes,
Daughter of Earth! thou art as fair
As those who tread the skies.

And when in my enraptured ears
Thy murmuring accents flow,
I think some spirit of the spheres
Hath wandered here below.
For angel lips alone could move
In melody so sweet;
Child of the Skies! behold thy love
A suppliant at thy feet.

THE DEVOTEE

Time's rude, unsparing hand will chase
Thy loveliness away;
But there 's a nobler, loftier grace
That triumphs o'er decay;
The heart that never once betrayed,
That changing years have tried,
When all thy other beauties fade,
Shall draw me to thy side.

THE TEMPTRESS

BELIKE thou art a temptress come from hell,
The devil often dons a fair disguise;
And yet I like the laughter in thine eyes,
And for thy lips,—I love them wondrous well;
They oft remind me of an ocean shell,
With all its murmuring melody of sighs,
Till I forget, when captive to their spell,
The whispered music may be naught but lies.

Nay, nay! I do thee wrong; have I not felt
The rosy rebels into sweetness melt,
And seen thee swoon within my close caress?
What matter if thy lips the word withhold,—
In the mute music of thy pulses bold
Thy love grows voluble and doth confess.

VACILLATION

THE blessing and the curse alternate rise;
One day I swear that thou art fairer far
Than the chaste beauty of yon silver star
That nightly hangs her lamp in western skies.
The next I look on thee with other eyes,
Thy beauty hath all vanished and thou art
Foul as a leper, and thy traitor heart
Seems but a sink of craftiness and lies.

One day, with many a passion-prompted vow,
I braid Love's votive blossoms in thy hair;
The next I tear the tribute from thy brow
And crown thee with the curses of Despair.
Swayed by the changing moon, tides ebb and flow,
So to thy fickle heart these moods I owe.

THE DEAD CALYPSO

WHERE be thy witcheries now, woman of wonderful beauty?

Priestess of pleasure and love, thy lotus hath withered at last.

Sweet was the soul-searing cult taught by thy liberal kisses,

Sweeter the chalice of love formed by thy sensuous mouth,

Ripe as the rapturing grape, rich as the rose in its redness,

But unto them that did drink fatal as waters of death.

Left unto thee are the dregs, bitter and biting as wormwood,

Freezing the blood in thy veins, leaving thee rigid and cold.

Strange that these lust-loving lips, prodigal once with such passion,

THE DEAD CALYPSO

Wreathe themselves into a smile chaste as a
maiden's in sleep!

Ah, how they 've changed since I first crushed
their voluptuous vintage!

Shrunk is their soft silken skin, as when the
tropical sun

Drinking the life of the grape, leaves it aban-
doned and shriveled,

Gibbeted on its own vine, swinging like felon
forgot.

Mute is thy murmuring voice, silent its pas-
sionate pleading,

Which, like a song of the sea heard in a
whispering shell,

Called me so softly to where, rising through
ravishing roses,

Love's longed-for heaven appeared, fair as a
rhapsodist's dream;

Misted with halos of gold, yet but a vanishing
splendor

Miraged in exquisite grace over a desert of
death.

THE DEAD CALYPSO

But when the pulses of youth throb with their
eager insistence,
When the white snows of the heart melt with
the breath of the spring,
Then when the currents of life leap with
ineffable joyaunce,
Where is the hand that can point whither their
waters will wend,
Whether through vistas of peace, on to Love's
infinite ocean,
Or through dark devious ways, seeking the silt
of the sewer.

Dead is the light in thine eyes, yet Recollection
beholds them,
Beaming with beauty like stars mirrored in
slumbering seas;
Where through the darkness they dream, till
the warm kiss of the morning,
Or the wild breath of the gale, drowns them
in wave-woven foam.

THE DEAD CALYPSO

Thus when the Roses of Love blushed with
the Poppies of Passion,
Crowning our cup of Desire, hid in the draught
was a charm,
Which when thy lips fell from mine, sighing
and sated, would soothe thee
Into a deep, dreamless swoon where the bright
violet beams
Faded away from thine eyes, which in the
sensuous slumber
Shone 'neath their uplifted lids white as the
lilies of Death.
Moistened with ecstasy's tears were the rapt
azures when turning
Into thy love-laden brain, there Passion's secret
to find;
Blind were their opaline orbs, on which I
looked with amazement,
Till my lips, clinging to thine, coaxed the lost
irises back.

Now under curtains of wax, lustreless crescents
of whiteness,

THE DEAD CALYPSO

Cold as the frost on the pane, hint of those
rapturous hours;
Where is their luminous gleam, which like the
treacherous beacons
Lighted by wreckers to lure mariners on to
their doom,
O'er Life's unpiloted sea shone with a bale and
a beauty,
Till the poor credulous bark dashed on the rock
of thy heart?

Springtide of Life when the Soul, hearing
Love's wakening whisper,
Glows in the flame that Desire lights in the
blood to betray!
Summer that seethes in the veins, purpling
Lust's grapes for the crushing,
Which, in a wine-press of Pain, leave the black
dregs of Despair!

This I was taught when thy heart, drunk with
delirious passion,

THE DEAD CALYPSO

Changed to a charnel where lurked ghosts of
thy deep-buried past,
Which from their sepulchre stole once in a still
starless midnight,
Bearing a chalice, rose-wreathed, drugged with
the lees of dead loves.
Draining the perilous draught, swift through
my pulses the purple
Rushed while our wet mingling mouths crushed
the rich raptures that curse;
Then learned I Lust's lurid lore, whispered by
thee, whom I worshiped,
Whom I had deemed half divine, shrined as
a saint in my heart.
Oh, how it leaped when thy lips, voicing thy
vows meretricious,
Sighed like a girl's whose pure love murmurs
with virginal bliss!
Ah, how it bled when they turned, babbling
in sleep that betrayed them,
Seeking mine own in the dark, breathing some
lost lover's name!

THE DEAD CALYPSO

Swiftly the meshes of silk spun into steel, but
I lingered,
Fondling the fetters I feared, fearing to fling
them away;
Lost to the lips I had loved, yet with the thirst
of a drunkard
Draining the draught that enslaved e'en while
the spirit recoiled.
Day after day, as the scales fell from mine eyes,
I beheld thee
Garbed in the glamour of Lust, rise from the
ashes of Love.
Night after night, though my fears, lulled by
thy lips, fled like phantoms,
Soon every sigh that I heard seemed but a hiss
from the grass;
Even thy sob of farewell stifled a laugh when
I left thee
Coming at last, dear, to lay Love's chrismal lips
on thy brow.
Long, long ago in the past, God's proud and
white-pinioned angels

THE DEAD CALYPSO

Found in the daughters of Earth all that their
souls could desire;
Why should I wonder that thou, fairest and
frailest of women,
Didst with thy sorceries snare the souls and the
bodies of men?

Where are thy worshipers now, they who did
pant to embrace thee?
Where is the homage they breathed deep in
these death-deafened ears?
Where are the gems and the gold, offered with
love, that could make thee
Faithless to him whose cold lips whisper of
passionless peace?

GIVE ME THY LIPS

GIVE me thy lips, and let me feel
That they forgiveness grant
For much that these poor rhymes reveal.
Give me thy lips, and let me feel
The raptures that once made me reel,
That through these verses pant.
Give me thy lips, and let me feel
That they forgiveness grant.

THE DREAM

ON thy white breast that mocks the snow
Once in a dreaming hour I leaned;
I felt thy placid pulses glow,
As from thy modest mouth I gleaned
The rosy raptures that eclipse
The joys that waking wooers know,
And then I laid my fervid lips
On thy white breast that mocks the snow.

Oh, how thy heart responsive beat
With new-born passion's blinding bliss
That calmed the conscience that would cheat
And chide me from that glowing kiss!
O clinging limbs! O yielding breast!
O lips unlessoned! yet replete
With passion, yearning to be pressed;
Oh, how thy heart responsive beat!

THE KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING!

WHEN Villon sang the melted snows,
The white shroud of a buried year,
Say, did the traitor winds disclose
Their hiding-place, or tell him where
Were laid the dead, the debonair
Lost women whom he loved to sing?
No, but they sighed, then answered clear,
The King is dead, long live the King!

Why weep the love-surrendered Rose?
Is faded beauty worth a tear?
On yonder stem another grows,
In fresher fragrance hanging there;
While in the waking breeze we hear
The love-song of the joyous Spring
Shouting above old Winter's bier,
The King is dead, long live the King!

THE KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING!

And thus the cycling measure goes;
One day fond lips allegiance swear;
The next the fickle wanton throws
Her eyes on some new cavalier,
Who for a season short may wear
Her favors, in his turn to fling
Them to the winds for one more fair;
The King is dead, long live the King!

ENVOY

Prince, when you listen to the cheer
Which through your crowded courts shall ring,
Remember, thus they 'll hail your heir,
The King is dead, long live the King!

THE CRIMSONED GIFT

IF I thy naked spirit could behold,
As oft thy classic comeliness I've seen,
Garbed only in its beauty, and I ween
That Fate to few e'er gave a fairer mould,
I wonder what the vision would unfold!
Thy flesh, tho' fair, enshrines a soul whose sheen
Is radiant too, and though by Love controlled,
Love is divine if it no malice mean.

Or if thy heart within my hand were laid,
Brought bleeding to me from thy white wan
breast,
And every ruddy drop were voluble
To answer me; with faith, all unafraid,
I'd kiss the crimsoned gift, though it confessed
That which in life it lacked the strength to tell.

ADIEU D'AMOUR

FAITHFUL in every fibre of thy heart,
And all as beautiful as thou art true,
Yet if it be thy wish that we should part
Let 's unkiss all our vows and say Adieu.

The love that glowed so warmly in thy breast
Is dying slowly,—shall we let it die?—
Yea, if the flickering flame brings thee unrest,
My tears shall drown it as I weep Good-by.

Good-by? Ah, no! We cannot break the chain;
The fetters fused in Passion's crucible
Are hard to sever; so we must remain
Bound to each other, though we sigh Farewell.

ENGLAMOURED

THERE'S a love that every other love excelleth,
And its glamour doth outglow the noonday
sun;
'T is the faith that with suspicion never
dwelleth,—
"Tis the rapture that is reckless to outrun
The fond hope that every compassed joy sur-
passes,
That but lives to realize thy blest embrace;
They may bid me look on thee through Doubt's
dark glasses,
But I only see the beauty of thy face.

HAPPY DAYS

THERE is no music like the merry clink
Of glasses when some fair one's health we drink;
There is no toast more fitting than the phrase
My mistress murmurs: it is, "Happy Days!"

Wet with the wine, her red lips part to show
Pearls that are whiter than the winter snow;
The amber beads that glitter in the glass
Blush crimson as her rose-leaf lips they pass.

The mirth, the music, and the wit and wine
With whispered word and kindling kiss combine
To fan within my heart the flame that lights
The way from happy days to heavenly nights.

O Heavenly Nights! An Arctic winter were
Too short to linger by the side of her,
Whose lips would make it seem a night in June,
On whose brief bliss the dawn would break too
soon.

LUST'S TIGER TEETH

BUT till thy heart is mine and mine is thine,
All passion will be pale 'twixt thee and me.
Compare it now with what it then would be,
That were to liken water unto wine.
If thou wert fair as she before whose shrine
A world doth kneel—the foam-born deity—
And I a god, did not our souls combine,
Our passion-prompted vows were perjury.

The brute within the blood may ramp and rave,
Or fawn and fondle, till the tender tone
Of Love's soft sigh is counterfeited well;
But 't is the flesh that for the flesh doth crave,
Lust's tiger teeth that tear us to the bone,
To leave us at the last in living hell.

WHAT GHOSTS ARE THESE?

How thy blood-kindling kisses answer mine
When locked in thy voluptuous limbs I lie!
How heart to heart and pulse to pulse reply
And bring the blushes that incarnadine
Thy velvet cheeks! How those wet lips of thine
Murmur to me the soft surrendering sigh,
That means the moment of our bliss is nigh,
In which the currents of our love combine!

Delirious dream! What ghosts are these that stalk
Into the breathless after-pause to freeze
The blood that burned and clamored for
thy charms?
Dark demons they, who come thy vows to mock,
And wake imagination till it sees
Thy beauty panting in another's arms.

L OF C

THE SWOON

I HAVE swooned near to death in those white
 arms of thine,
 Till the trance that enthralled me hath grown
To a dream where the glories of heaven were
 mine,
 Then have waked on thy bosom to own
That the seraphs who stroll through the regions
 above
 Never know the rare bliss that I feel
When I wander with thee where the labyrinths
 of Love
 Their most exquisite raptures reveal.

I have looked on the stars till my listening ears
 Have been filled with the strains of the blest;
But my soul a more eloquent harmony hears
 In the dreams that I dream on thy breast;
'T is the low blissful beat of a heart that replies
 With a passionate love unto mine;
'T is the melody heard in thy murmuring sighs
 When my being is blending with thine.

THE SWOON

I have walked where the demons of Sorrow and
Pain

Mock the memories of happier days;
I have drunk the dark dregs of Despair that
remain

In the cup of the Love that betrays;
But thy lips, like the breath of a spring that
has fled,

In my heart have awakened once more
All the glorious dreams of the days that are dead,
And their peace and their passion restore.

VICTOR LOVE

TENDER, melting lips, distilling
Love's rich vintage, sweet and rare;
Trusting, pleading eyes, now filling
With the bright reproachful tear,
A sob so sweet, so softly low,
A breath of heaven, a knell of woe.

Ah, the murmuring and the sighing,
And the tumult in each breast!
Heart to heart is now replying,
Victor Love is crowned and blest;
The tyrant sits in Reason's throne,
And claims the kingdom for his own.

How he scatters all his treasures
On his subjects, you and me,
Golden showers of Passion's pleasures;
Godlike mortals now are we!
What care we for the sword of flame
That bars the gate through which we came!

VICTOR LOVE

What, beloved, art thou sobbing,
Weeping that there 's no return?
How thy timid heart is throbbing!
How thy cheeks with crimson burn!
My kiss shall teach thee to forget,
And love shall triumph o'er regret.

WITH CAP AND BELLS

WITH cap and bells, day after day,
The jester's jolly part I play.
Yes, "Motley is the only wear,"
The only fabric that will bear
Time's touch or turn Fate's frown away.

The wisest in the world are they,
Earth's laughter-loving ones, who stray
Along through life from year to year,
With cap and bells.

A laugh our sorrow can allay,
A sigh our merriment can slay;
Give me the jest that's not a jeer,
Give me the smile that's not a sneer,
And you may crown me till I'm gray
With cap and bells.

O SINGER OF THE SEVEN SEAS!

(To Rudyard Kipling)

WHEN Triton's thrilling trumpet tone
Sang first across the restless blue,
From East to West, from zone to zone,
Such witchery o'er the waves he threw,
That Orpheus from his lute ne'er drew
Such music for the rocks and trees,
As that which o'er the billows flew,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

That sounding shell was shoreward thrown
To thee by Amphitrite, who
Now hears across her surges blown
The wave-worn ballads that she knew
Long, long ago; but there were few
She loved to listen to like these
Which from thy lips come clear and true,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

O SINGER OF THE SEVEN SEAS!

These broad blue tides we call our own,
Methinks should have another hue,
For in their deadly deeps is sown
The flesh of many a fearless crew.
Though for our Admiralty we strew
To shore and shark the fullest fees,
Still, "Give us more!" the surges sue,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

Not for the "Meteor Flag" alone
Dost thou all other song eschew;
We hear the Liner's engines groan,
We feel the Freighter's "bucking screw";
The Derelict drifts past our view,
Scoffed by the surge, mocked by the breeze,
Storm-driven, battered and perdu,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

Yet not alone old Ocean's moan
Thy many measures doth imbue;
To sing the soldier thou art prone,
Thy ringing rhymes are a tattoo;

O SINGER OF THE SEVEN SEAS!

When Tommy Atkins walks askew,
Or stands at anything but ease,
He gets from thee the proper cue,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

Familiar forms again are shown,
Nor would we from this verse taboo
The "Rag and Hank of Hair and Bone,"
We knew her well, the shallow shrew,
And wonder how we came to woo
And swear our love on bended knees,
But long ago we said adieu,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

ENVOY

This somewhat sorry ambigu
Smacks of the ballade's strict decrees;
Our Muse dislikes the stern gooroo,
O Singer of the Seven Seas!

THE TEARFUL TROTH

IT is a tale that has been often told,
The story of a love that leaps to life
And blooms in beauty, though a dark distrust
Lurks ever near to menace and destroy.

It is the legend of the love that lives
Through doubting days and through the har-
rowing hours
Of long and lonely nights; the love that dreams
Of unforgettable and feverish things
That burn within the blood and bring again
The memory of the murmured midnight vow,
When mutual melting lips were wont to tell
The thrilling and—perhaps—the tearful troth.

Ah, fond and fair, low-voiced and lovely-limbed,
Made of the classic clay that wakens men
To valorous deeds, or drugs them with desire,
Until they dream that lust and love are one—

THE TEARFUL TROTH

From dawn to dark I see thy faultless face,
And through the night it haunts me, till I feel
That I could gladly give my life to live
One brief but blissful hour on thy white breast.

The memories of the past cannot outweigh
My world of present woe; I feel as one
Who, worn and wearied in a wilderness,
Wherein no fountain springs or food is found,
Dreams of the glorious days that once were his,—
The feast, the flagon, and the flowers and fruit,
And hears again the mocking melody
Of one familiar, unforgotten voice.

So in my dreams I sometimes feel the lips
That kissed away my cares and chained my soul
Within a charm that Time can never break,
Then wake to wonder if I ever steal
Into thy thoughts as thou dost into mine.

I LOVE THEE STILL

I LOVE thee still; there's not a day
That drags its dreary length away,
From dark December unto June,
Or winter night, or summer noon,
But unto thee my fancies stray.

Poor heralds of my heart are they
Who would to thee my love convey
And woo thee with the wearying tune,
I love thee still.

Ah, but to feel thy pulses play,
And once again my head to lay
On thy white breast! For such a boon,
Though thou art fickle as the moon,
My lips would cling to thee and say
I love thee still.

WAIFS

LOVE'S kindest kiss oft to a flame hath fanned
A latent passion and consumed the best.

One morn a girl's pure lips to mine were pressed,
And Ruin's dreaded gulf was rainbow-spanned,
O'er which we passed into a pleasant land.

But when that night she wept upon my breast,
She seemed a love-lost angel on the strand
Of some strange star, wing-wearied and unblest.

Not all unhappy, still we drift along,
Down the wild waters of Love's waif-strewn sea;
And closer do we cling when others tell
Of that dark whirlpool in whose eddies strong,
Frail passion-freighted lovers, such as we,
Are dragged by undercurrents down to hell.

TO A TREE

OFT hast thou bent before the gale,
And heard the tempests 'round thee roar;
Oft hast thou found their fury fail,
As down on thee the demons bore;
They wounded thee in many a war,
But still thou standest unsubdued,
To battle with them as before,
Mute type of Patient Fortitude.

Though vainly they thy strength assail,
Of scars they gave thee many a score;
Though thou art armored with the mail
That fiercer onslights may ignore;
Still many a limb from thee they tore
And on the plain their plunder strewed,
Trophies that Time cannot restore,
Mute type of Patient Fortitude.

TO A TREE

The pleasant pathways of the dale
 Let sighing Strephon still explore;
Yea, he may have the flowery vale
 And fair-faced Phyllis there adore.
Thy silent shade to me means more.
There oft, in melancholy mood,
 I stroll to learn thy saving lore,
Mute type of Patient Fortitude.

ENVOY

To calm blue skies I see thee soar,
 Forgetful of the Borean brood
Harked on by thunder-throated Thor,
 Mute type of Patient Fortitude.

GIVE A BEGGAR A HORSE AND HE'LL GALLOP TO HELL

GIVE a pauper a purse that is bursting with gold,
And the meats and the music, the women and
wine

You will soon in a profligate pageant behold,
For he cannot to luxury's limits confine
The ambition that burns in his blood to out-
shine

Even lavish Lucullus, whom none could excel;
There is truth in the phrase, there is lore in
the line,—

Give a beggar a horse and he'll gallop to hell.

He may rot in his rags, he may freeze in the cold,
He may snore in the sewer, or crib with the kine,
He may crunch the hard crust that is charity-
doled,

He may share, like the prodigal, husks with
the swine,

All of poverty's curses may in him combine,
Till the dogs that licked Lazarus 'gainst him rebel,
But I say it again, tho' the saying's not mine,
Give a beggar a horse and he'll gallop to hell.

GIVE A BEGGAR A HORSE

Ah, what pictures the portals of Pluto unfold!

What diversions the devil delights to design,
When the clattering hoofs of the courser con-
trolled

By the pauper are heard on the easy incline!

Then Beelzebub doesn't take long to divine
Who is riding so hard, for he knows the pace
well,

And awaits with a welcome most warm and
condign;

Give a beggar a horse and he 'll gallop to hell.

ENVOY

You must pardon me, Prince, if this envoy
enshrine

The sad lady whom Pluto took with him to
dwell;

But to fry in the flame near the fair Proserpine,
Give a beggar a horse and he 'll gallop to hell.

THE CRUST OF CONTENT.

HE who for some great aim hath never sought
More than Life's stern demands to satisfy
Climbs closer to the gods, whose needs are naught,
Than he whose sordid soul doth multiply
The millions which he vainly dreams will buy
The calm content that gold hath never bought;
Crœsus to Solon this confessed when brought,
Bankrupt and conquered, to the stake to die.

The crust that balks the wolf may sometimes be
Sweet as the manna in the wilderness;
'T is when the soul forgets the flesh to stray
Where, in the realm of some harmonious dream,
It listens to the whispered words that bless,
And learns the charm that chides the world
away.

FROM CRYPT AND CHOIR

FROM crypt and choir these rhymes are penned,
For grief and gladness in them blend;
There is a cell beneath Song's fane,
Where many a prisoner of pain
Hath found the Muse his closest friend.

Above his couch she comes to bend,
She teaches him to make and mend
The psalm he sues her to obtain
From Crypt and Choir.

She makes the organ's thunder rend
His raftered roof; the tones descend
And flood the dungeon with their strain;
But unto her he turns to gain
The calmer chords she loves to lend
From Crypt and Choir.

WE MUST SIT SILENT WHEN THE DEVIL DRIVES

Of all the sayings and the saws we hear,
The precepts and the proverbs, new or old,
While many fall like folly on the ear,
A few are weighted well with Wisdom's gold,
And oft some philosophic treasure hold;
Their little homilies guide many lives;
When over smooth or rocky roadways rolled,
We must sit silent when the devil drives.

When through the gloom the lights of home
appear,
To welcome us across the wind-swept wold;
When 'round the blazing hearth we gather near,
Safe-shielded from the tempest and the cold;
Then, while some song is sung or story told,
Fate, from the freezing world without, arrives
And like a wolf glares on the sheltered fold;
We must sit silent when the devil drives.

WE MUST SIT SILENT WHEN THE DEVIL DRIVES

The future may be faced without a fear;

If through the past we have not blindly
strolled,

It often lends a light to lead us where,

Havened in peace, our hearts may be con-
soled;

Though Destiny by Fate is oft controlled,

Yet when the heart upholds the hand that strives,

Fortune and Fame o'er Failure may be
scrolled,

Though we sit silent when the devil drives.

ENVOY

Prince, many a man for years has been cajoled

And buffeted by Fate, yet still survives;

But till we slumber softly in the mould,

We must sit silent when the devil drives.

JOB

MAJESTIC Mourner! When thy spirit moaned
Itself to music on thy matchless page,
When thy great sorrowing soul in anguish
groaned,
And when Fate flung to thee her galling gage,
Oh, what a soul-sustaining heritage
Was hidden in the fortitude that owned
How vain and weak it were a war to wage
With Him, the Lord, who sits in heaven
enthroned.

Thy flesh was fed to foulness, Sorrow clad
Thy soul with sackcloth, and thy forehead
frowned
With the black ashes of a heart consumed.
But through it all, O Man of Uz, thy sad
But sure philosophy thy trials crowned
With perfect peace that out of patience
bloomed.

THE HIDDEN HAND

THE hidden hand that strikes the mystic chords
Which wake Love's rapturous and responsive thrill
In kindred hearts, oft sweeps the sobbing strings
Of Sorrow, till soul whispers unto soul
The symphony that chides our tears away
And turns Grief's midnight to a golden dawn.

LOVE ME ONCE MORE

LOVE me once more. Ah, what have I to do
With love, or what has love to do with me?
And yet thy face by day and night I see,
And with this prayer my soul doth thine pursue,
Love me once more.

Love me once more, and it will teach the pen,
That pleads so feebly to thee on this page,
To tell lorn lovers, in some after age,
That love, though dead, may leap to life again.

LOVE ME ONCE MORE

Love me once more; and these poor rhymes I
write

In thrilling trumpet tones shall sound thy
name,

Till it shall echo where the Peaks of Fame
Are bathed forever in ambrosial light.

Love me once more. Dost thou no longer heed
That which had once been life's supremest
prize?

And wilt thou now the proffered gift despise
And turn away to mock me as I plead

Love me once more?

THE PROMISED PEACE

IT is the season when we turn again
The pages of the past and pause to read
Of One who gave unto the sons of men,
Long years ago, the best and purest creed
That ever proved its word in worth and deed;
And though the tidings to the shepherds told
Are unfulfilled, again we hear and heed
The hymn the hosts of heaven sang of old,
What time from star to star their hallelujahs rolled.

Now tho' we look with reverence on the past,
And with fond faith its sacred story tell,
Yet have the mists of Mammon o'er us cast
The bane of unbelief, until we dwell
Within the dark indifference of a spell
Which Christ himself should come again to
break;

THE PROMISED PEACE

That bard were base as he whose cold kiss
 fell

Upon the Saviour's cheek, did he forsake
The truth for fictioned phrase, or with false fingers
 take

From out the treasured past one grain of gold
 To gild with flattering pen a present pride;
And for the future,—no man may behold
 And chart the crafty currents of that tide
 Down which it is our destiny to glide
To where, across Time's trackless waters, roll
 The black and baffling mists of Death that
 hide

The unknown bourne, which to man's dream-
 ing soul

Shines ever through the gloom, a hope-created
 goal.

The promised peace to earth has never come,
 And never will, as long as man shall hear
The blaring bugle and the muttering drum
 Call him from kith and country on to where

THE PROMISED PEACE

The hosts of Greed and Glory skyward rear
Their crimson-colored banners to his gaze;
The while the lusts of loot and empire sear
His soul to selfish ends and sordid ways
That mock the Star of Peace that did o'er Beth-
lehem blaze.

Or worse than War's shrill clarion that wakes
The sleeping thunder for some foreign foe,
Is the soul-slaying thirst for gold that slakes
Its craving where far better blood doth flow.
No Roman triumph in the past could show
Captives chained closer to the chariot wheel,
Than Mammon's modern conquerors, who
know
No creed but gold, whose hearts can never feel
The peace that passeth all their vaunted vaults
reveal.

The flesh is more than raiment, and the life
Is more than meat; yet we the truth disdain,
And struggle blindly in a ceaseless strife,
For what, when won, to ashes oft doth wane.

THE PROMISED PEACE

We labor on with hand and heart and brain,
But at the best we build upon the sand;
The peace we long for ever doth remain
Beyond the aching heart and outstretched hand,
And seems a myth that man may never understand.

Beneath the burden of the primal curse
We toil and sweat, but could more bravely
bend
And bear the galling yoke, yea, were it worse,
If we but knew what waits us in the end;
Or if we could back through the ages wend
And hear Pan's reeds, Apollo's peerless lyre,
See Cytherea from the foam ascend,
And Hera's eyes blaze with a jealous ire;
Ah, glorious golden days, what more could man
desire?

The gods and myths of Greece have never
flown
From field and mountain and from grove
and stream;

THE PROMISED PEACE

They ever live, but we ourselves have grown
Blind to the beauty of the splendid dream
That thralled man's senses ere the searching
beam.

Of Science shone with rapture-wrecking ray,
Before the din of dynamo and steam
Moaned Fancy's dirge and drove us forth to
stray

Far from the pictured night into the dreamless day.

Now, though the fountain of our faith be dry,
And in Life's waste no cooling stream ap-
pears,

Hark! to the chorus rolling through the sky!
It calls across the desert of the years
And chides our pagan dreams and skeptic
sneers.

For from the lesson of His love we learn
The faith that falters not, the hope that
cheers

Life's darkest hours, and through Him we
may turn

Into the path that leads to that for which we yearn.

TEARS

COULD I but crystallize these midnight tears
And gather from their beaded bitterness
A rosary for burning lips to press,
Some pain-born token of these joyless years
To teach the faith that saves, the hope that cheers,
Then would I bid these fountains of distress
Flow fast and free, if their sad floods could bless,
Or murmur peace in some poor sufferer's ears.

Have I not known, O God!—have I not felt
The benediction of another's verse
Steal o'er me in the dark and lonely hour?
Hath it not made my stubborn heart to melt,
And turned to prayer the deep rebellious curse,
And soothed my soul to rest with saving
power?

JUBILATE DEO

(A. D. 1897)

RIGHTEOUS Ruler, Royal Lady, throned in
majesty and splendor,
Thou, before whose matchless prestige all the
past and present pale,
Hear the world-encircling chorus which thy
many millions render,
Hear our mighty Jubilate, Sovereign-Queen
and Empress, Hail!

While thy white-walled island shaketh with the
message that is pouring
From thy thunder-throated warders as they
tell it to the deep;
While the heaven-storming anthem now above
the clouds is soaring,
While the bounding heart of Britain doth
with exultation leap,

JUBILATE DEO

All along the seas the echo rolleth till Earth's
corners listen,
Mighty marts and commerce-crowded ports
and rivers hear it swell;
Lonely islands of the ocean, set in tropic tides
that glisten
Into gladness, speed it onward, and the tale of
triumph tell.

Where the dawn of new dominion into splendid
noon is glowing,
And the bright prophetic legend over Afric
skies is scrolled;
Where thy sons the seeds of empire with ambi-
tious hands are sowing,
There they think of thee and England, and
their song is skyward rolled.

Hark! while India's dusky myriads in their
many tongues proclaim thee;
Mighty Empress of the East, three hundred
millions to thee call;

JUBILATE DEO

There from Scinde to far Sadiya, now again we
hear them name thee,
Now again their mingling voices ring from
Gilgit down to Galle.

Where in unfamiliar beauty Night's bright
lamps are hung in heaven,
While the starry crux is dying in the dawn of
Austral skies,
There the cannonading chorus flashes forth from
lips of levin,
And o'er sunny seas of sapphire on from isle
to island flies.

Drowned to-day the mighty music of Niagara's
falling river,
Lost in pure Pacific pæans mingling with
Atlantic's roar;
Mountain, field, and lake are listening, into life
the forests quiver,
For they hear Vancouver calling unto lonely
Labrador.

JUBILATE DEO

Many a bivouac and barrack hear the reveille
rejoicing,

Many a citadel and fortress frowning over
foreign foam,

Know the music of that bugle, and with tongues
of thunder voicing

Forth a great *Io Triumphe*, roll an answer-
ing message home.

Where the sheltering flag of England over land
and sea is streaming,

Where beneath a foreign banner British hearts
beat quick with pride,

Where across the trackless waters England's
ships are swiftly steaming,

Where her barks with tempests battle, or at
anchor safely ride,

There thy liegemen now salute thee, for wher-
ever they may wander,

'Neath that flag is always England, but to-day
it is a shrine

JUBILATE DEO

Where they kneel and on her thousand years of
matchless glory ponder,
Rising never to forget the brightest of them
all are thine.

Where the home and hearth are sacred, yea,
wherever women glory
In the virtue that men value, where in every
land they dwell
For long years they've learnt to love and linger
o'er thy stainless story,
And a world of women's voices of another
empire tell.

Golden mists of sixty summers melt and we
again behold thee,
Maiden-monarch, sceptred, symbolized, throned
and crowned as England's Queen;
There the promise of the present with its glory
aureoled thee,
While the ancient Abbey's arches never bent
o'er grander scene.

JUBILATE DEO

Then we see thee wife and mother, tranquil days
of joy whose fleetness
Grandeur, glory, power, and prestige could
not for a moment stay;
Days that dawned in peace and compassed every
rare domestic sweetness,
Till a life-enshrouding shadow fell across thy
cloudless way.

From thy lips the lurking Spoiler dashed the cup
of all thy gladness,—
O ye Mountains of Gilboa! tears were then
your dews and rain;
Then from Dan to Beersheba all the land was
filled with sadness,
For our grief with thine was mingled when
thy lofty mate was slain.

Ah, we miss thy minstrel Merlin, who with swift
unfaltering fingers
Taught the sounding Harp of England
Honor's hymn and Sorrow's tale;

JUBILATE DEO

Over many a song immortal, sung to thee, how
Memory lingers,
Till we almost hear his voice and see the guid-
ing Gleam and Grail!

Nay, the Gleam is ever with us; thou for sixty
years hast worn it,
'T is the guiding light of England, Glory's
star and Honor's ray;
On thy forehead now it resteth, Truth and
Righteousness adorn it,
And it still shall lead us onward, as it lights
our path to-day.

Now tho' Court and Camp and Cloister, Art
and Song around thee cluster,
Till the glory that enfolds thee seemeth more
of heaven than earth,
Yet it cannot for one moment blind us to the
brighter lustre
Of the the faith that never faltered, of the
woman's splendid worth.

JUBILATE DEO

Though with triumph and with pageant and
with pæan we extol thee,
As we lift thee and enthrone thee on the height
of England's fame,
Yet thy three-times-twenty years of blameless
womanhood enroll thee
With a halo that outshineth all thy gemmed
tiara's flame.

Now unto the King of Kings, the Lord of Hosts,
the God of Nations,
On whose Truth for strength and wisdom
thou with fearless faith dost lean,
While the prayer and psalm are mingling with
an Empire's acclamations,
Unto Him we do commend thee, Sovereign
Lady, Empress, Queen!

WEARY

NOT as a means of grace
And hope of glory,—No.
But could I see Thy face
And hear the blessing flow,
As when Thy living lips the promise poured,
Then would I kneel and wait for mercy, Lord.

Ye weary, come to me
And I will give ye rest.
Have I not bent the knee
And all my soul confessed?
Art thou a myth, O God, or am I blind,
Groping in gloom for peace I cannot find.

Oh, shed one beam of light,
And when my flesh is wrung
Through agony's long night,
When all my life is hung

WEARY

On Retrospection's cross, and when the spear
Of Conscience strikes my soul, then be Thou near.

Whisper one word of hope,
That my faint heart may know
How with these fears to cope,
And respite gain from woe;

Bind up my wounds and breathe the healing balm
Of one kind word, to comfort and to calm.

Not for a heaven unearned,
Nor to escape a hell,
My lips have often burned
To drink of Mercy's well;

Yearning in that sweet flood themselves to steep,
And drift away from life in dreamless sleep.

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

SUPREME Unknown, whom yet we trace
But dimly through a darkened glass,
When shall the mists that hide Thee pass,
And we behold thee face to face?

For countless ages we have trod
The lower trails that lead to Thee,
Now on the distant heights we see
The banners of the hosts of God.

A thousand gods have we confessed,
And warped our worship age by age,
Creed blotting creed from off the page,
An ever-changing palimpsest.

Long through the gloom Thy skies we scanned;
We cried to Thee, but Thou wert dumb;
Yet Faith oft heard a whispered "Come,"
And Fancy felt a guiding hand.

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

Confirming our audacious guess,
Thy lightnings clove the clouds and seemed
To write amen to all we dreamed,
Thy crashing thunders answered "Yes."

Altars and fanes to Thee we raised,
Built on one vague but constant hope
That taught us through the gloom to grope,
While on the silent stars we gazed.

For Thee we searched the skies, then turned
The glass upon the atom, till
We saw the life within it thrill
To clasp the mightiest star that burned.

Life yearning unto life, the spark
Within the seed that bursts the sod
Claims kindred with the unknown God,
But never leaps the bridgeless dark.

Hope crying in the gloom, a child
Amid strange lights and shadows lost,
'Twixt doubt and fear perplexed and tossed,
By any whispered word beguiled.

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

Unfaltering faith may seek to tear
And sweep the baffling veil aside;
We know not if the dead deride
Her efforts, but the living hear

Death laughing ever at her creed,
Blighting each promise ere it bloom,
Till all the past seems but a tomb,
And every hope a broken reed.

A tomb! a broken reed! Ah no!
We die, but dying leave behind
That which may teach us yet to find
Where Life's immortal waters flow.

A thousand ages yet unborn,
Pregnant with promises that cast
Their beams before, may bring at last
The birth-blaze of the coming morn.

Within the growing light we fade
With all the things of yesterday
That swift-paced Progress flings away,
Or Science scoffs into the shade.

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

Or as the scattered fragments fly
Beneath the Builder's hand, so we
Fall from the fabric that shall be
A temple lifted to the sky.

Or is it Babel that we build
Age after age upon our dead?
And is our faith a fiction fed
On dreams as vain as those that filled

The sons of Noah when they toiled
And piled the tower on Shinar's plain?
Oh! is the hope we cherish vain,
And at the last shall we be foiled ?

Nay, when far future years have passed,
Our lives shall not have been for naught,
For out of bleak oblivion brought,
We shall behold Thy face at last.

THE CROSS - CROWNED CAIRN

A WHISPERED prayer, a stone with reverent hand
Laid near a cross that on a cairn doth stand,
This and no more; no fragrant buds to wreath
A garland for the silent dead beneath;
No requiem rolling on the desert air
To guide us to the lonely sleeper there;
No rudely written legend to proclaim
His birth, his death, his country, age or name.

Yet never vault, from dark Machpelah's cave,
Where Israel's primal patriarch found a grave;
Nor yet the dome that Artemisia raised
O'er Caria's king, at which a world amazed
In wonder stood; nor Ghizeh's gloomy pile,
Housing the haughtiest Pharaoh by the Nile,
Nor sacred shrine, nor quiet cloistered fane,
Whose gloomy crypts Earth's proudest dust
contain,
E'er sent a softer slumber than these stones
Which shelter from the sun a wanderer's bones.

THE CROSS-CROWNED CAIRN

The prayers we pray, our dirges of distress,
'Neath carven arch, or in the wilderness,
What are they to the dead ? Oh, who can say
Where the dread Spoiler pauses, if the clay
Alone surrenders to his blighting breath,
Or, whether down the sombre stream of Death,
The spirit, drifting into darkness, dies
As did this flesh beneath these scorching skies?

It is not so; the Symbol that doth keep
Its lonely vigil on yon stony heap
Is eloquent, and tells of Him who first
Through Death's unbroken barriers did burst.
Of Him on whom a world has learnt to lean,
And from the darkest hours of grief to glean
The Hope that helps when other comforts fail,
The Faith that falters not before the veil,
The Love that prays in every Christian land,
When in the presence of the dead we stand,
That though the dreamless dust may never wake,
The soul may somewhere see the morning break.

CONSOLATION

A SOB of sorrow sounding through the strings
As Recollection ponders on the past;
Is this the only solace Memory brings
To soothe a soul that shivers in the blast?
How soon the feast was followed by the fast!
How quick the fruits and flowers turned to dust!
How swift the waters sped on which I cast
The bread of life, that cometh back a crust!

A crust? Ah, no! Though barren is the shore
Of that once tempting tide whose waters hold
The dreams of youth that in their depths
were drowned,
Not fruitless is the flood; its waves restore
What Folly flung to them a thousand-fold,
When on the strand some pearl of song is
found.

THE CAVERN OF GLOOM

COME, throw those white arms of thine, dear,
around me, pillow thy fair fervid cheek
on my breast,

Listen again to a story of sorrow, learn how the
loneliest heart may be blest.

Welcome awaits thee whenever thou comest,
morning or eventide, midnight or noon,
Or when the tempests of winter are wailing, or
when the faint fragrant breezes of June

Murmur their vesper o'er verdurous meadows,
soothing to slumber the birds and the
flowers,

Then, when the gloom gathers deeper and
darker, hearken to me through the harrow-
ing hours,

Once so familiar, but now all forgotten, faded
and lost in a Faith that defies

All that Despair in the dark ever dreaded, all
that Grief glared at with slumberless eyes

THE CAVERN OF GLOOM

Aching for day that but dawned to deride me,
longing for night ere to noon it had grown,
Thus, through the years and their varying
seasons, reaping the whirlwind, I lingered
alone.

Vain as the vanishing fabrics that Fancy builds
in a waterless waste to betray,
So in Life's desert the phantoms I followed,
mirage-like, mocked me, then faded away;

Onward I went till the bird-song was silent,
dry every fountain and dead every bloom,
Footsore and weary, for peace ever panting,
came I at last to the Cavern of Gloom.

Cold as a charnel and black as Cimmerian
midnight the goal of my destiny seemed,
Little I thought that its sombre surroundings
meant the dark durance that's never re-
deemed.

THE CAVERN OF GLOOM

Meant what the strongest would shrink to encounter,—yea, what the bravest would fly from in fear,

Should the curse come like a bolt that's death-freighted, thundering from skies that are silent and clear;

But the grim harvest that Grief weeps to garner,
Fate whispered warningly to me when Life
Leaps in the pulses and laughs at the future,
strolling where Hebe's red roses are rife.

Fancy oft smiled through the shades of my prison, breathing the words that were sweet to my soul;

Oft through the darkness, all weaponed to wound me, Pain with his merciless myrmidons stole;

Racked me and flayed me and tore me with torture, till near the last this great lesson I learned,—

THE CAVERN OF GLOOM

Misery's midnight may glow with a glory,
flooding the Cavern of Gloom till it's
turned

Into a temple that soars to the heavens, reaching
a region of infinite calm,
Where sacred strains of ineffable sweetness roll
from an organ and blend with a psalm

Crooned as a slumber-song soothing to sorrow,
sung as a blessed placebo to pain
By the clear voices of white-pinioned seraphs
sent through the shadows my soul to sustain.

THE VANISHED VINTAGE.

WHEN the hopes that we cherish, the dreams that
we dream,

And the joys that defraud us are dead;

When the Past only mocks us and never a beam

From the close-curtained Future is shed;

When we falter and fall, as we grope in the gloom,

And our feet with the thistles are torn,

When the cankers of Conscience begin to consume,

Do we over our misery mourn?

Yea, we weep as we think of the vintage we crushed

From the rich ruddy grapes of the Past;

And we dream in the dark of the faces that flushed

With a beauty that mocked at the blast;

Through the long lonely night and the desolate day,

When our folly and fate we deplore,

Oft the ghosts of dead pleasures stalk by us and say,

If you could you would do as before?

ATAXIA

MY world has shrunk at last to this small room,

Where like a prisoner I must now remain.

I'd rather be a captive in the gloom

Of some deep dungeon, tearing at my chain,

For then, perchance, my freedom I might gain.

Ah God! to think that I must languish here,

Shackled by sickness and subdued by pain,

To die a living death from year to year,

Joy banished from my breast and Sorrow brooding there!

Yet these familiar walls do sometimes fade,

Then my faint eyes on fair horizons rest;

By Memory's distant lights I am betrayed,

And Hope a moment flutters in my breast,

Till I forget that I am all unblest.

ATAXIA

Unfettered fancy wanders far away
To where the lips I loved and often pressed
Seem mine once more, and make my pulses
play

Anew with youth's wild heat and half revive this
clay.

I often think how once these stumbling feet,
That now can scarcely bear me to my bed,
Were swift to follow, as the wind is fleet,
The baleful beam that to destruction led;
Nor paused I till the lurid light had fled,
Till on mine ears there broke the dismal roar
Of that black stream whose waters wail the
dead;

Dumb with despair I stood, and from that
shore

Saw Charon's ghostly craft and heard his doleful oar.

Thou domineering power, or Love, or Lust,
Or Passion, or whatever else thou art,
Though thy red roses now are naught but dust,

ATAxia

What splendid spectres from their ashes
start!

What hunger they awaken in the heart!
What fever in the blood! And in the brain
What dreams they build when day's dull
hours depart,

And Slumber drives away the demon Pain,
And loosens from my limbs this curst ataxic chain!

Then Memory wakes and through the darkness flies

Afar to where the golden past appears,
And lingers there to listen to the sighs

A boy is breathing in a wanton's ears.

Her lips taught his the burning kiss that
sears

The heart 'gainst love, but lights the lust that
leaves,

Or soon or late, an aftermath of tears,
When, in the waste of life, the sower grieves
To gather from the gale his dead and withered
sheaves.

ATAXIA

I shrined her as a saint within the heart,
'Gainst which her own had leaped a thousand times;

But Fate stepped in and tore our lips apart,
And drove me in despair to distant climes.

Long years have passed since then, but could
these rhymes

Bring back that leman and those dreamed-of
days,

Their strains should soar to where celestial
chimes

Blend with seraphic hymns of ceaseless praise,
And from the dead, cold past that matchless minion
raise.

Had Time but halted for us as the sun
Stood still on Gibeon while Joshua strove!
Ah no, the silver moon of Ajalon
Would have looked kindlier on those nights
of love!

Little cared we for sun or moon above,
Or for the gems upon the black-browed night,

ATAXIA

We may have seen them through the
heavens move,
But recked not, thought not of their wheeling
flight,
Blinded, poor love-sick fools, by Passion's daz-
zling light.

Oft in that light's fast-fading afterglow
Her visioned presence unto me appears;
And as I first beheld her long ago,
The same alluring loveliness she wears;
Oft in the midnight Recollection hears
A sweeter plaint than Pandion's daughter's
strain
Murmured by lips that kiss away my tears,
While in my dreams I clasp her form again,
Then wake with outstretched arms, to find the
vision vain.

Amongst a legion of lost loves her face,
Through Memory's mists, seems fairest of
them all.

ATAXIA

Though heaven was mine when locked in her
embrace,

Yet there were others, whom I oft recall,
Who wove Lust's purple threads through
this dark pall

Long years ago in Passion's panting loom,
Before Life's honeyed cup had turned to
gall,

Or yet the day had deepened to the gloom
That wraps me like a shroud within this living
tomb.

O Marah! Marah! as thy bitter stream
Was turned to sweetness by the magic tree,
So the dark current of my years doth seem
To flow at times in murmuring melody;
'T is when, dear Lyric Maid, I turn to
thee;

Then the light laughing loves of other days
Hide their false faces, or like shadows flee;
Oft had I fallen in these cheerless ways,
But heard thy whispered words that rescue and
upraise.

ATAxia

Now tho' these limbs are cold and almost dead,
And torture runs through every sluggish vein,
Yet is endurance out of suffering bred,
And fortitude to triumph over pain;
The wasted body shrinks, but still the brain
Urges the palsied hand along the sheet,
On which, alas! tears sometimes fall like rain;
But Fancy even Misery can cheat,
And in the pain-born rhyme oft find a refuge sweet.

But even there, the Spoiler with his scythe
Torments the wasted sheaf he waits to reap;
His torturing reminders make me writhe,
Till, mad with pain, I beg the final sweep
That surely soon must come to give me sleep.
Still one retreat is left, to which I flee;
Dear dreamy draught! in which I often steep
Senses and soul, I turn again to thee,
And drift down Lethe's stream out on Oblivion's sea.

THE LOOM

A WEARIED weaver at the loom, I gaze
On that which I have woven till mine eyes
Grow dim to see the fabric it displays,—
The warp of all my work seems woofed with
sighs.

No more for me Life's shuttle swiftly flies,
But falters feebly through the fibred maze,
As thread on thread it slowly multiplies,
Weaving, alas! a weft of dreary days.

For in the woven meshes there appears
The sombre shade of Sorrow. Do I weave
But sackcloth for my soul? And am I now
But one who gloats upon the garb he wears,
Who in the shadow sits apart to grieve,
The ashes of his life upon his brow?



SOME PRESS NOTICES OF POEMS BY LOUIS ALEXANDER ROBERTSON.

Could I but make explanation of the term sufficiently comprehensible, I would readily elect to call Robertson the poet a Greek. By so denominating him, I would aim to express in a word the dominant note of sensuous classicism that pervades his singing. There is in it a throbbing vitality, a fearless exaltation of the body urged through the very adoration of the mystery of creation. A handling less purely classic would put such verses beyond the pale.

In all his work exalted spirit and suspension of the clear note from beginning to end make beauty in the lines. Robertson's mechanics of verse structure are of such high order of perfection as to induce the effect of spontaneity. No ticking of the metrical rote machine interferes to mar the harmony between thought and sound.—*San Francisco Call*.

Louis A. Robertson's book, "The Dead Calypso," made him a singer of national note.—*New York World*.

A notable feature of the work of this poet is the near approach to perfection of his poetry.—*Buffalo Courier*.

Some of Robertson's sonnets are equal to the best in the English language.—*San Francisco Bulletin*.

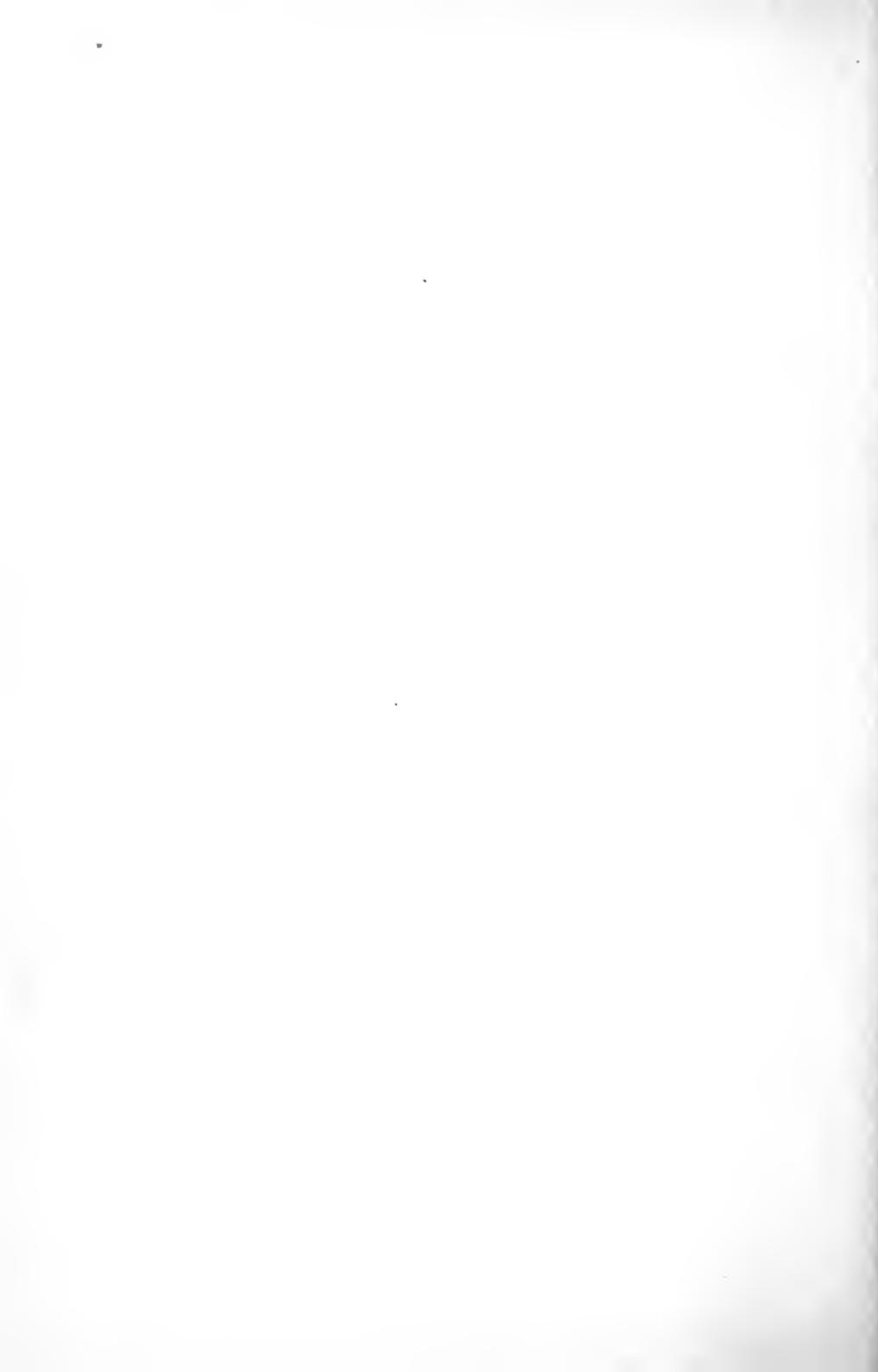
The collection throughout shows the hand of a master, and is sure to be welcomed as a real contribution to the poetic literature of our country.—*Trenton Times*.

The melody of the verse is as notable as the warmth of its fancy.—*New York Times*.

His work has fire and grit in it; it has also much tenderness and sadness. It runs the gamut from the most spiritual aspiration to the rage of desire defeated in satiety. In the matter of form all the verses are exquisitely done; in the matter of feeling the intensity is poignant; always the song has color to it,—has blood and bone and flesh woven through it.—*St. Louis Mirror*.

There are poems in this volume of noble range. Robertson is certainly a purist, and has a thorough knowledge of the technique of poetry. He is never guilty of a false quantity, nor does he ever lower the tone from its original setting. He is one of the few poets of the day whose work can be read more than once.—*San Francisco Post*.

Robertson's lines reveal the faculty of making the old mythology real. Like Keats, he fuses his thought into an imaginative glow that makes the fables of Greece and Rome live again for us of these prosaic days. Those who feel the sway of his passion will recognize the hand of a master.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.



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